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RECENT JEWISH LITERATURE

Sepher Maphteah Shelomo (Book of the Key of Solomon). An exact facsimile of an original Book of Magic in Hebrew with illustrations. Now produced for the first time by HERMANN GOLLANCZ. Oxford: UNIVERSITY PRESS, 1914. pp. xxiii + 72 + 7 double pages of Hebrew text, 4to.

IN 1903 Prof. Hermann Gollancz published a brochure under the title *Clavicula Salomonis*, &c., Frankfurt a. M., in which he gave a description of a Hebrew manuscript in his possession dealing with magic and practical Kabbalah, and ascribed to no less a personage than King Solomon. The editing of the manuscript was then deferred for a later time. In the present volume Dr. Gollancz offers to the reader an exact facsimile of the entire manuscript, which with its numerous magical and kabbalistical diagrams and illustrations, fills 158 pages in quarto size. The bulky text so reproduced is preceded by a short introduction in which the editor summarizes briefly the conclusions at which he had arrived in the afore-mentioned brochure. 'In order to serve as examples of the contents of this work, and also as a guide in deciphering the Hebrew cursive script of an Italo-Spanish character, in which this copy is written,' he also gives transcripts in square Hebrew character of several passages (twenty in number) selected from various parts of the work, all of which, except the introductory passage, are accompanied by a literal English translation. On the title-page of the manuscript we read that the latter represents the first copy (העתק ראשון) of an old work which had been hidden in a cave in Babylonia (בארץ שנער), a favourite place for spurious Hebrew works; see e.g. the title-page of the work *ראומה*, Constantinople, 1566), and was brought to Holland by the desire of a prince in the entourage of 'Kaiser Carlos' (probably referring to Charles VI of Austria). The copy is dated Amsterdam,

1722 (י"ח ה'תכ"ב). In view of this explicit statement, it may be remarked in passing, there was no need for the editor (Introduction, p. v) to search for internal evidence in order to prove that we have before us a copy from an older manuscript.

The work is a compilation of the superstitions rampant at all times, in all countries, among people of different creeds and nationalities. There is no trace of any attempt on the part of the compiler or compilers to differentiate between Hindoo, Arabic, Greek, or any other elements. It is a mosaic of international nonsense made Jewish by the Hebrew language, in which it is garbed, and by a strong admixture of kabbalistical material taken from the *Book Raziel*, and similar sources. Hosts of angels and seraphim with the most fantastic names and titles, gins and devils, and all sorts of evil-doers in heaven and hell, running easily into the thousands, fill the pages of this curious hand-book of occultism and sorcery. Fervent prayers and incantations, magical formulae and prescriptions for the sure performance of miracles, specifics for various maladies accompanied by magic circles and curious illustrations, conjurations of demons and angels, who are to be forced into our service—all this surges indiscriminately upon our mind, claiming recognition as a perfectly safe and legitimate means for our overruling the destinies of earthly life and setting aside the laws of nature. We are taught how to secure the love of a woman, how to discover a thief, how to fly through the air on a cloud, how to make ourselves invisible, how to make a light burn in the midst of water, how to escape from prison, and a great variety of other performances of no less importance. In numerous instances we are assured by the writer that the recipes here given have been tried either by himself or by others, and were found to be absolutely reliable. On fol. 25 b we are told in the name of בלינוס (i. e. Apollonius of Tyana; comp. Steinschneider, *Pseudepigraphische Literatur*, p. 32; *Hebräische Uebersetzungen*, p. 845, n. 6) that a certain experiment purporting to stop slander has been tried on Saracens and Jews (השרציני והיהודים) and proved successful!

The editor, who is known as an author of several works on

scholarly subjects, promises a complete translation of the text into English (Introduction, p. iv). Whether this work deserves a translation or not, I leave to the judgement of those interested in magic and occult sciences to decide. The folk-lorist and the antiquarian, whose interest the editor invites, may find therein some material which will prove useful in their studies of kindred literature. Moreover, as the compiler has made use of other branches of knowledge, such as astronomy and astrology, medicine and physiognomy, &c., an English translation may recommend itself also from a general point of view. However, the examples of deciphering and translation Dr. Gollancz has given in his Introduction do not encourage one to believe that he is sufficiently prepared to carry out properly such an undertaking. Although he has occupied himself considerably with the study of the manuscript, he often fails to read it correctly, and, naturally, wherever the text is misread it is also mistranslated. Here are some examples: Fol. 1 b, Prayer 2, the text reads **אלהי עולם אשר לפניו כל הנראים והבלתי נראים**, God of the Universe, before whom are all the visible and invisible beings. Dr. Gollancz (p. vi, line 1) reads **הנבראים** and translates 'before whom are all the created ones and the uncreated'. Two lines further the text reads: **הביטה נא היום אל עבדך הנדכה עם רוחו וגויתו תחת רגלך. למען רוח קדשך חנני והקימני לראות בהדרך** look, I beseech Thee, this day unto Thy servant, who is crushed in spirit and body under Thy feet; for the sake of Thy holy spirit be gracious unto me and preserve me that I may behold Thy Majesty. Dr. Gollancz reads **הבינו** (*sic*) for **הביטה** and, construing the sentences in a wrong way, translates against all sense: 'Endow *me*, Thy servant, this day with understanding, lowly pressed as I am both in body and spirit beneath Thy feet, for the sake of Thy Holy Spirit. Be gracious unto me,' &c. ! Fol. 2 a, line 1, the word **הביטה** is again misread as **הבינה** (*sic*) and translated (p. vii, Prayer 6) 'make *us* understand'. Fol. 3 a, line 15, the manuscript has **תתענה ג' ימים**, *fast* three days. The editor reads (p. viii) **תתמנה**, and translates 'count three days', a meaning which, by the way, the form **תתמנה** never has.

As the editor's mistranslations in these instances are due

chiefly to his mistakes in deciphering the manuscript, they might eventually be overlooked, but Dr. Gollancz often misunderstands the text in a surprising manner even when he has the correct reading. Thus the passage (p. vi) הן נא ברכתך היום על כל מעשי is translated, 'grant unto my actions this day Thy blessing *and the confirmation of Thy watchfulness*' (the italics are mine). The latter phrase in this translation is, of course, senseless, but קיום is a synonym to מעשה, and the author means to say, 'grant Thy blessing unto my actions and my *performance of Thy commands*'. Prayer 5 (p. vii) reads: אב המרחם ובוהן לבבות, אשר בשמים וארץ ים ומהומות וכל אשר בהם רצית, Compassionate Father, who triest the hearts, who takest delight in heaven and in earth, in the sea and the depths, and in all that is in them. Dr. Gollancz translates, 'Compassionate Father, who triest the hearts *which are in heaven* and on earth, the sea and the depths, and all that is in them; *they unto whom Thou hast granted favour*' (!). Prayer 6, on the same page, reads: המשפיע ויוצר כל: המפשות ונותן כל הטובות הרצוניים. God is here described as causing to emanate from Him, and thus creating all souls (a very common conception in philosophy and Kabbalah), and as bestowing upon the world all the good created by His grace. Dr. Gollancz makes of this passage, 'who formest all souls in abundance, and givest *all the good things that are favourable*' (!). The words אל ישקטם בעולם (p. viii) form a separate sentence: 'God silences all evil, and rules over all that is done in the world.' As the sentence is preceded by the words ויתיר הרעות כלם (i. e. the magic practice, as prescribed in the passage before us, will loosen, undo all evil), Dr. Gollancz, disregarding the word אֵל, and referring the whole to the magical procedure, is embarrassed by the seeming repetition, hence translates, 'It loosens every form of evil, *so much so that it will lay all evil*, and have power over everything that is done in the world'. P. xv, l. 4 from bottom, a certain disease of the eye is adjured that whatever it be, a film or blemish 'or any thing whatsoever, it should be blotted out and depart out of the eyes' (או איזה דבר מה ימחה וילך חוץ מן) (הענינים), not as is here rendered, 'or as *regards any other thing*

that can be blotted out, that it go forth out of these eyes.' P. xvii we are taught a ḵabbalistic trick by which a high personage can be hypnotized, and in this state made to promise that 'he will come during the day to seek me, with the express purpose of doing my will' (ויבא ביום לבקשני, דוקא כרי לעשות רצוני). This is translated, 'and come to seek me out literally, so as to do my will'. What is 'seek out literally'?

As may be expected, the author of the book uses certain technical words peculiar to this class of literature, e.g. לקשור, to prevent something from happening by a magical stratagem, literally to *tie up* (an Arabism, comp. Steinschneider, *Hebräische Uebersetzungen*, 540, 848); להחלים, to inspire one with a dream (see below), לבד as an adjective in the sense of אחד and יחיד = unique, and מעלה as a synonym to פעולה (see p. vi, מעלי ופעלי!), practice, operation, designating the whole process of performing magical tricks, as designed in this work. The executor of such holy tasks is therefore styled בעל המעלה (see fol. 5 b, ll. 3, 4, 22). On p. ix we thus read: אמר שלמה בשפע אלהי אחד הוא האל יחיד: Said Solomon by Divine inspiration, God is one, unique, the religion is one, and one is the magical practice, which the Creator has deigned to reveal to mankind.' Dr. Gollancz, not familiar with the terminology, translates '*God alone is one, and there is one Faith only—the exalted one* which the Creator desired to be revealed unto mankind', thus taking המעלה, &c. quite conveniently, but against all grammar, as an adjectival description of אמונה (Faith). But what about the parallel passage forming the first few lines of the author's Introduction, where we read: אמר שלמה ע"ה לבד אחד האל יתברך לבד המעלה לבד האמונה = Said Solomon, peace with him, unique, one is God, blessed be He, unique the (magical) practice, unique the Faith'? Dr. Gollancz reproduces also this passage (p. v), but it is the only one which he wisely left untranslated. On what etymology is the verb החלים (p. xvii f.) translated four times by *overpower*, *overwhelm*, and *coerce*? Isa. 38. 16 does not warrant this meaning. I suspect the editor had in mind the Talmudic phrase (Rosh-ha-

Shanah, 28 a) עתים חלים ועתים שוטה (28 a), but the context of our passage makes it clear enough that it means to *cause one to dream* (comp. Jer. 29. 8).

I do not follow up in detail all the other mistakes made by the editor in the reproduction of the text. I shall simply register them along with the correct readings of the manuscript given in brackets. P. iv, מפי שלמה [מפי שלמה]. P. v, l. 2, בהתחלה היה, [בהתחלה היה]; the words במלאכת and מראלים, *ibid.*, ll. 3 and 9, are misprints for במלאכה and אראלים; l. 15 יתחכם [יתחכם]. P. vi, l. 3, omission of אשר after כלם. On what ground is here assumed that מונון means 'O Witness!'? It is quite improbable that either the author, or the editor, have here thought of the Haggadic interpretation of the biblical 'manōn' (Prov. 29. 21) as witness; s. *ḥ. Sukkah* 52 *ḥ.* P. viii, l. 4, תאמר, read תאמר; l. 7, כנדר [נדר]; l. 9, וייתבש [וייתבש]. P. x, l. 1, [משעוה] שעה; l. 2, [הרכבים] הרברים; l. 6, the manuscript clearly has הימנית, but the editor reads הימניך, and to emphasize the mistake he adds *sic* in parentheses; l. 19, יושעו [יושעו] (see p. xxiii). P. xiv, l. 4, מוציאי [מוציאי]; l. 5, תוּו [תוּו]. P. xv, l. 2, מעבירים [מעבירים]. The whole Hebrew passage is here misplaced, as it belongs after the next two English lines. P. xvi, l. 1, וזרוק (so in the manuscript) should have been corrected into זורק; l. 5 from below, ותרואהו [ותרואהו]; last line, לקראתי, read לקראתי.

In view of the fact that all these mistakes in reading and translation occur in a text which, taken all in all, covers but about four pages, and which the editor has deliberately selected for the reader to serve as a key to the 'Key', it seems to me that if an English translation of this book is to be given, it should be undertaken by someone who would apply himself with more care and circumspection than are displayed in this Introduction.

After all this criticism it gives one genuine satisfaction to note that the work as a whole is splendidly got up, and that it is a great merit of Dr. Gollancz to have been instrumental in making this unique manuscript accessible to the Hebrew literary world by what is described as the collotype process, which alone made it possible to reproduce exactly also the perplexing drawings

and diagrams that cover its pages. So far as I know there are only three other Hebrew books that have ever been published in such a luxurious fashion.

Jewish Mysticism. BY J. ABELSON. London, 1913. pp. viii + 184 (third volume of the *Quest Series* edited by G. R. S. MEAD).

The border line between rationalism and mysticism cannot always be definitely established. Whether a given conception is assigned to the one class or the other depends often upon the discretion of the individual thinker. For what appears to the one as a mystification, or a thought without reality, may look to the other as clear as daylight, as an established fact that needs no proof. The writer of a history of mysticism, who wishes to satisfy all readers, therefore, is confronted by a somewhat difficult task. He must make sure that what he treats as mysticism will be recognized as such also by those who are inclined to consider some religious abstractions as absolute certainties, and would not agree to seeing them classed with mystical conceptions. Moreover, in order 'to write profitably on Jewish mysticism, it is necessary to have, not only a discriminating sympathy with the mystical standpoint, but also a first-hand knowledge of Jewish religious literature, the peculiar genius of which, perhaps, no one but a member of the race that has produced it can adequately appreciate and interpret' (G. R. S. Mead in his Editor's Preface).

Dr. Abelson, the author of the present work, fully comes up to the requirements here pointed out. With a sound literary taste and critical judgement he well succeeds in keeping himself beyond the danger line, avoiding on the one side a philosophic rationalization of purely mystical ideas, and on the other eliminating from his presentation all those elements of mysticism which by their nature are apt to confuse the modern reader rather than to enlighten him. Of course, this procedure necessarily renders the author's presentation incomplete, but, as he states

in his preface, the little volume is 'designed to give the reader a bird's-eye view of the salient features in Jewish mysticism rather than a solid presentation of the subject as a whole'. As such the book admirably suits the purpose. Following upon a general Introduction (pp. 1-15) some of the earlier essential elements of mysticism (e. g. the Merkabah = Chariot idea, Angels, Wisdom, Shekinah, Kingdom of Heaven, &c.), as represented in Talmud and Midrash, in Jewish-Hellenistic and early Christian literature, are interestingly discussed (16-97). Special chapters are then devoted to the elucidation of the mystic theories of the *Book Yeşirah*, the *Zohar*, the *Sefirot* doctrine, and other conceptions of the mediaeval Kabbalah. A spirit of genuine sympathy with the mystic aspect of Jewish thought is noticeable throughout the pages of the book, while the abundant quotations from the literature prove the author's familiarity with the sources.

On several occasions Dr. Abelson unnecessarily symbolizes Haggadic passages, seeing in them certain mystic thoughts which must have been foreign to the Talmudic authorities; see e. g. pp. 41 ff. the interpretation of the passages relating to Jonathan b. 'Uziel, Johanan b. Zakkai, &c. P. 81, ll. 24-5, the words 'before' and 'behind' must exchange places in order to give sense. The quotation from Nahmanides (p. 87) might better have been left out, as the idea is quite unclear even in the Hebrew text, and is irrelevant. The author's deduction from certain Talmudic passages that in the mind of the Rabbis 'the Jew fills no higher a place in the Divine favour than do the good and worthy of all men and races' (p. 96), involves a great exaggeration and betrays an undesirable apologetic tendency. The assertion that the doctrine of the primordial substances (water, fire, and air) being represented by certain Hebrew letters came into Greek philosophy from ancient Hebrew theosophy (p. 102) seems to me without any historical basis. The passage regarding the two attributes of God, Justice and Mercy (p. 150), is mistranslated, the names Jahweh and Elohim being inverted.

Somewhat irritating are the ungrammatical transliterations of Hebrew words as *ruhniim*, *gālgālim*, *sichlim* (64) for *ruḥāniyyim*,

galgallim (or *galgillim*, Isa. 5. 28), *sēkālīm*; *geyvekah* (85) for *gawwēka*; *hivra* (147) for *hiwwārā*.

In the Bibliography one misses D. Joel's *Die Religionsphilosophie des Sohar*.

These things do not detract, however, in any way from the essential value of the book, which is to be recommended to every one who wishes to get a general idea of Jewish mysticism.

The Cabala. Its influence on Judaism and Christianity. By BERNHARD PICK. Chicago: OPEN COURT PUBLISHING CO., 1913. pp. 109, small 8vo.

Christian theologians, especially those concerned in the conversion of the Jews, always showed much interest in the Jewish *Ḳabbalah*. Certain passages in the *Zohar*, the text-book of Jewish mysticism, which seemed to bear out the doctrine of the Trinity and other church dogmas, were claimed by these theologians and zealous missionaries as unmistakable evidence of the truth of the Christian religion. The author of the present booklet, likewise a missionary, does not make any attempt to Christianize the *Ḳabbalah*, but merely wishes to provide the English reader with a book on the subject, because 'it is surprising how scanty the English literature is on the Cabala'. The importance of the latter for the present generation he bases on 'the interest taken in it by men like Raymond Lully' (thirteenth century), Picus de Mirandula, Reuchlin, and other mediaeval Christian worthies. We have no quarrel with the author for having been prompted by the circumstances so described to enrich English literature by a book on the *Ḳabbalah*. We have a right to expect, however, that he would first provide himself with some knowledge on the subject drawn from the original Hebrew sources. What we find instead is a cheap compilation from the works of Jellinek, Graetz, and others, without a trace of literary skill or any penetration into the subject. Entire pages are copied literally without the slightest hint as to the source (see e. g. pp. 39-44, and Graetz, *History*, IV, 3-11). A reference

to the *Jewish Encyclopedia*, from which the description of the *Zohar* is taken, in part verbally (comp. pp. 46-9, and *JE.*, XII, 601, col. 2), is likewise suppressed. Instead, we are constantly referred by the author to his own 'articles' in McClintock and Strong's *Cyclopedia*, a publication which need not be consulted on the literature under consideration. In the so-called *Bibliography*, too, the best and most popular Jewish works on the *Ḳabbalah* (Landauer, Franck, Jellinek, Joel, Karppe, &c.) are, of course, omitted, but the compiler has the effrontery to remark at the end of the list: 'We have purposely refrained from referring to the historical handbooks of D. Cassel, S. Bäck, G. Karpeles, &c., because they offer nothing from a critical point of view; and for obvious reasons(!) we make no mention of articles on the Cabala in English Cyclopaedias.' No commentary is here necessary. That the author cannot read correctly a line of unpointed Hebrew is obvious from his transliterations of Hebrew words; see e.g. p. 45 the transliterated title of the *Zohar*. 'English literature on the Cabala' would, therefore, be much better off if authors like Dr. Pick would leave it as 'scanty' as they suppose it to be.

Nuevo hallazgo de una inscripción sepulcral hebrea en Toledo (reprint from the *Boletín de la Real Academia de la Historia*, vol. LXVII). Por el Doctor A. S. YAHUDA. Madrid, 1915.

Hallazgo de pergaminos en Solsona, un capítulo sobre la poesía hebrea religiosa de España (reprint from the *Boletín*, &c., vol. LXVII). Por el Doctor A. S. YAHUDA. Madrid, 1915. pp. 8 + 41.

Contribución al estudio del Judeo-Español (reprint from the *Revista de Filología Española*, vol. II). Por el Doctor A. S. YAHUDA. Madrid, 1915. pp. 32.

After a period of unbroken silence lasting over four centuries we hear again the voice of a Jewish scholar addressing itself to the scholarly world in the Spanish language from the chair of

a Spanish university. Dr. Yahuda, who about two years ago was appointed Professor of Jewish history and literature at the University of Madrid, is endeavouring to make accessible to the scholarly world everything of Judæo-Spanish origin that may still be found in the possession of the Spanish people and may throw new light on the history of the Jews in the Iberian Peninsula. Students of Jewish literature, burdened as it is with too many languages, have for years past considered the study of Spanish as something of a *hors-d'œuvre*, but may in future have to take it up again as part of the regular course of their linguistic studies—if, indeed, they care to come in touch with what promises to develop into a new phase of Jewish learning in Spain.

Dr. Yahuda's first publication deals with a sepulchral Hebrew inscription, counting only twelve lines, which was recently discovered on a granite block in the court-yard of Dr. Francisco López Fando of Toledo. The latter, a reputable physician and a man of letters, had noticed for some time the graphic characters on the surface of the stone, and invited Prof. Yahuda for an examination and eventual deciphering of the content. It was then found by the examiner that the block in question was originally one of the tombstones of the Jewish cemetery of Toledo, which, towards the end of the sixteenth century, was plundered by the Christian inhabitants of the city, its monuments being carried to various places, where they were made to serve all kinds of domestic needs. Fortunately some anonymous scholar of the sixteenth century had copied seventy-six epitaphs from the stones of that cemetery prior to its destruction. By some unknown circumstances the copies became the possession of the Royal Library of Turin, Italy, and were later published by the famous S. D. Luzzatto in his *אבני זכרון*, Prague, 1841. It so happens that the inscription deciphered by Dr. Yahuda is identical with no. 70 in Luzzatto's edition. It is the epitaph of a certain R. Jacob b. Isaac *אלסאדקאסן*, who fell a victim of the Black Death on the twenty-seventh of June, 1349, while performing his duty as a physician. Dr. Yahuda republished the text with a Spanish translation and notes. A new feature in this publica-

tion is the special page on which we are shown for the first time the peculiar arrangement of the intertwined lines as they were engraved on the stone. The copyist of the sixteenth century did not reproduce the diagram form of the inscription, hence it is lacking also in the edition of Luzzatto. Line 6 offers an essentially better reading than is given in the latter. The find is of value also for the student of Hebrew palaeography.

The second study of Prof. Yahuda belongs to the field of liturgy. As he informs us at the beginning of the essay, two parchment leaves covered by Hebrew script were recently found to have been pasted into the cover of a manuscript codex in the Library of the Academy of Solsona. They were removed and sent to the University of Madrid for examination. Here the author identified the content as representing fragments of the following six liturgical productions: 1. Prologue (רשות) of David b. Eleazar Ibn Baḡūda (twelfth century) to Solomon Ibn Gabirol's Exhortations (אזהרות); 2. A hymn of Judah Halevi of the class called '*Ahabah*' (אהבה); 3. A poem on the Ten Commandments by an anonymous author; 4. Ibn Gabirol's '*Azharot*'; 5. A hymn on the revelation of the Law showing the acrostic Joseph (see p. 7, n. 2); 6. A poetic Introduction to the prayer '*Nishmat*' for Pentecost by Judah Ibn Ḡayyāt (eleventh century).

None of these pieces is complete, and with the exception of no. 6 they have all been repeatedly printed in complete form in the various Orders of Prayer for the Jewish festivals. In so far the liturgical material here recovered, without denying the interest attaching to the discovery of it and to the attending circumstances, cannot be said to be of any particular importance. Dr. Yahuda, however, in his desire to present to the learned Spanish public, which for reasons well known is entirely unfamiliar with matters Jewish, something of the spirit and ethical worth of the famous Hebrew poets, who once sang on the banks of the Ebro and the Tajo, took occasion to prepare an elaborate study on the subject. By a happy coincidence three of the poetical compositions represented in part by the fragments in question (namely, nos. 1, 2, and 4) are fair specimens of Hebrew poetry

in Spain, and are therefore well adapted for the author's purpose. The usual description of the MS., of which a facsimile is given, is followed by a general characterization of that species of synagogal poetry which is known under the name of '*Azharot*' (Exhortations). The influence of the biblical language on the style and phraseology of the mediaeval Hebrew poets is then very interestingly described. The fragmentary texts of Ibn Bakūda's Prologue and Judah Halewi's '*Ahabah*' are completed from the printed editions and given in full, while of Ibn Gabirol's '*Azharot*' (part II) only the fourteen introductory lines are given as example. For Ibn Ġayyāt's poem which, as noted before, is here published for the first time, the author made use of a copy from a Bodleian MS., but even so the poem, as the acrostic shows, still lacks at least three more strophes at the end. As a piece of poetry this poem does not possess any special merit. The style is artificial and clumsy. The text of all four pieces is accompanied by copious explanatory notes and references.

It could hardly be expected that a plain, though scientifically satisfactory, interpretation of the contents of mediaeval Hebrew poetry would appeal to the Spanish reading public or arouse its admiration for the Hebrew poets. Dr. Yahuda, who is of a poetic turn of mind—he has published some Hebrew poetry of his own composition—in a chapter called 'Analysis and Translation' (pp. 26-41), therefore, gives a highly poetical reproduction in metrical verse of the three poems (Bakūdah, Gabirol, and Halewi). The most interesting parts, however, are the introductory comments, which are inserted between the various strophes, and in which the author tries to acquaint the Spanish reader with the religious spirit that pervaded the poets in question while describing the grandeur of the Divine revelation on Mount Sinai, or the glory of the Holy Land and the Sanctuary as the seat of God, the loftiness and sublimity of the Mosaic Law, &c. The whole rhetorical exposition with the interposed verse cannot fail to make a deep impression upon the readers for whom it was intended.

A few corrections of mistakes may here be added. The

phrase *אזהרות ראשית לעמך נתת*, which forms the beginning of the oldest known *'Azharot*, cannot be translated '*en los primeros tiempos diste exhortaciones á tu pueblo*' (p. 8). The word *ראשית* is a symbolic name for the Torah (see the references in Theodor's *Bereschit Rabba*, p. 7, n. 3), and the meaning is 'Exhortations of the Torah Thou hast given to Thy people'. *Ibid.*, n. 2, for *Hasafrut* read *Hasefarim*; n. 4, for *Hagueonim* read *Gueonim Kadmonim*; p. 21, l. 17, read *Deuteronomio*, 6, 4-9 y 11; p. 22, l. 16, the author corrects the word *גבל* into *גבול* = boundary, and in a note tries to justify his correction. He overlooks Ps. 83. 7-8, where *Gebal* is mentioned as one of the tribes inimical to Israel. This Gebal has nothing to do with the town of that name (Ezek. 27. 9), which is referred to by the author. The whole note is to be cancelled. P. 24, n. 1, read *בן מושיע* *por ibn Gayat*; p. 26, l. 17, reference should have been made to Ps. 62. 12, as well as to the Talmudic interpretation of that verse (Sanh. 34 a), to which Ibn Gayyāt, no doubt, here makes allusion. P. 35, n. 1, the reference to *Shir Hashirim Rabba* is to be completed by ch. 1, ver. 2, letter 2.

The Imperial Academy of Sciences in Vienna has recently published an important study 'entitled *Beiträge zur Kenntnis des Judenspanischen von Konstantinopel*, by L. M. Wagner (Vienna, 1914, 4to, pp. xxii + 186), forming part of the philological section in the 'Schriften der Balkan-Kommission'. The special object of this work is to show the relations between the Judaeo-Spanish idiom and the old Spanish language, as also to investigate to what extent the former was influenced by other European and Oriental languages. Dr. Yahuda takes the work of Wagner as a starting-point for a highly interesting study on the subject, in which he gives his own observations among the Sefardic Jews of the different communities in Italy and Turkey, as well as the Balkan provinces which have formerly been part of the Turkish empire (Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, and Greece, especially in the large Jewish community of Salonica). By virtue of his extraordinary familiarity with the leading languages of the Orient and Europe he is able to trace a large number of hitherto un-

explained phrases and expressions in the Judaeo-Spanish dialect to their Persian, Arabic, or Turkish origin, or to some archaic element in the Romance languages, particularly old Spanish and Portuguese. Very often it is the author's intimate knowledge of the social and religious life of the Sefardic Jews in question that enables him to ascertain the meaning of some obscure words used by the latter. Thus, to quote a single instance, the word *compedron* used by Oriental Jews as a noun denoting the buttock, *podex*, is explained as a corruption of the phrase *con perdón* (=with your leave, I beg *pardon*), a phrase used before expressing a word which is considered obscene or repugnant. Many Jews, however, who knew the meaning but not the etymology of *compedron*, naturally regarded its use as an obscenity, and in order to avoid it used instead the word *mehila*, which, Yahuda shows, is the Hebrew מחילה, and likewise means pardon! It should be added that the Polish Jews, too, use a whole phrase as a noun in precisely the same sense: *Der Seid's-mir-mochel* = the 'I-beg-your-pardon', which corresponds exactly to *compedron*.

Students of Romance languages will find in this essay of Yahuda rich material gathered from fields which are usually inaccessible to them and which will, no doubt, prove very profitable.

פרי מנדיו שיר השירים בערבי נכתב ויצא לאור ע"י יצחק עבוד ס"ט ניו יורק תרע"ו לפ"ק.

The present world war has brought one more language to the shores of this continent. To Judaeo-German and Judaeo-Spanish is now added Judaeo-Arabic, and the booklet under the above title is the first literary production in this idiom printed on American soil. It is this fact that lends it some importance and recommends it for registration in this REVIEW. The little volume contains the translation of Canticles into vernacular Arabic as it is spoken by the Jews in some parts of the Orient. The author adheres to the plain sense of the biblical text without making any use of Midrashic ideas, which are so commonly employed in the interpretation of this book in particular. The

only liberty he takes is that he tries to render each verse in rhymed prose, which is a much-favoured form with Oriental writers. For the sake of obtaining the desired rhyme the author is, of course, often compelled to insert words for which there is no equivalent in the Hebrew text. In his Hebrew preface Mr. 'Abūd informs us that he had prepared this translation more than twenty years ago, having used it in his instruction of the school children in Aleppo, but did not care to have it published. He was urged, however, to do so by friends in this country.

It would require too much space to give a description of the style and manner of spelling used by the author. Two verses from the first and last chapters will suffice as illustration, and in order to show the deviations from correct Arabic I place the latter in parentheses :

(Cant. i. 5.)

סמרא אנה ולאכין חליה בל תמאם (סמרא אנה ולכן חל'ה (חל'ה or)
באלחמאם

יא בנאת דאר אל סלאם יא בנאת דאר אלסלאם
כי כיאם אל ערב כי שוקאק סולימאן. ככיאם אלערב כשקק סלימאן).

(*Ibid.*, 8, 11.)

כרם כאן לסולימאן פי מרג המון (כרם כאן לסלימאן פי מרג המון)
עמא אילא כרם לל נאטירין ואנעמהון עמא אלכרם ללנאטירין ואנעמהם
כול רגון ייגיב אלף קטעית פוצה פי כל רגל יגיב אלף קטעה פצה פי
תמרהון. תמרהם).

'The reader should excuse me', the author pleads in his preface, 'for having often placed the vowel letters (אורו") where they may not belong and for having used promiscuously the letters ס and צ, &c., as no correct method of spelling Arabic in Hebrew characters has as yet been established (!). I did the best I could, may the Lord forgive me!' We hope his wish will be granted, though we do not agree with the reasons he advances therefor.

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